pennsylvania musician
magazine
Vol.39 #450 April 2021

The Austens

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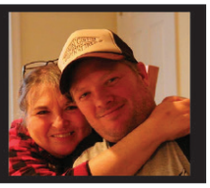
Editor Ramblings By Josh Noll



Hey PA the robin's are back and spring has sprung! The really good news is, as of April 4th bars can start serving beer without food and can increase capacity to 75%. As soon as the announcement was made, the news of shows and festivals started trickling in. Take a look through the paper and you will start to see that bands and venues are getting back to business.

XL Live has booked some great local bands to start things off; on April 17th, Defiant, Suicide Puppets, Lasciate, and Ultraviolent will be taking to the big stage. As local music lovers we need to all go pack the place and show XL Live that along with the out of state big name bands we also like to see our local guys on the big stage. On the 23rd you can catch Road Case, Devon Beck, Colt Wilbur and more! These will both be great shows so please attend and show support for the local music scene.

The Billtown Blues festival that was cancelled last year is now set to take place June 11th, 12th, &13th at the Lycoming County Fairgrounds in beautiful Hughesville, PA. Check out the ad on page 2 for all the details. Other festivals coming up quick are happening at The Susquehanna Valley Event Center located in Selinsgrove and The Bears Picnic in Blain. They are planning for a busy summer, starting off on May 29th with The Del McCoury Band, Owl & Crow, JP & Pappy of Cabinet and Serene Green. Followed by the 6th Annual GET DOWN featuring Cabinet for 2 nights of music with a long list of supporting bands on June 25th thru the 27th.

Smack dab in the middle of all that fun, presented by PA Musician Magazine, will be the Whitey Noll Celebration of Life on June 19th. The event will be held at a private farm in Perry County, hosted by Dave and Linda Russell. They have been PA Musician Magazine supporters for years and are opening up their farm to the public for this event. Details are still coming in and we are still working with the bands to make sure they can attend. So far the star studded lineup includes some blasts from the past with The SynD'cats, The Martini Bros., and The Sharks. Followed by some of the best that local music has to offer, with Road Case and Suicide Puppets rounding out the show. This is a BYOB event and we encourage people to bring a canopy and some chairs. Please car pool if you can as parking will be limited. There will be food trucks on hand to keep everyone fed and happy. There will be no cover charge but if you can afford a donation to cover expenses of the event that would be awesome. It will be a rain or shine event, with the rainy location to be held at the Facktory in Liverpool, PA. Keep an eye out for more details about this event and we hope to see you all there.

Local music lovers looking for a night out should consider The Sherman's Creek Inn. This is my new 'go to' location as they always have great food and drinks at an affordable price. This is not an exaggeration! Every time we go there it is mind boggling how cheap the bill is. Traveling around to bars and clubs all over the area, I am prepared for a $70-80 bill each night. Cut that in half for The Sherman's Creek Inn, its pretty amazing and makes catching a show much more affordable for the local music fan. The place is usually pretty full but if you're lucky you can get a table and enjoy some FREE live music. That's right no cover charge either. We caught up with The North Mountain Ramblers over at 'The Creek' and were not disappointed. These guys were right up our alley playing all the outlaw country favorites with classic hits like "Workin Man Blues", "Midnight Special" and just about every other song coming out of my home stereo including songs by Tom Petty, and one of my favorites DIRE STRAITS. Brad Bell did a great job belting out the lyrics and never missing a lead. He has some impressive guitar skills and the song choices match his vocal ability well. Backed up on bass by Alex Smyser and Al Weaver on drums it made for a great 3 piece. Not sure if Al plays with them all the time or not, but he did a great job. If you're looking for an entertaining night of music be sure to check them out on facebook and hit up one of the shows they have scheduled. Looks like they are getting booked up so if you're booking bands get a hold of them fast.

North Mountain Ramblers

This month on the cover is The Austens. Go check out the cover story on page 13 to find out all about what they are up too. Nick has gotten a lot of buzz going with his TikTok videos where he will teach you to play ukulele in less then a minute. Hell he even has our own Rachel Rocks playing Amazing Grace! I'm so proud of her. I couldn't believe my ears as she was even singing along. Thank you Nick, you put a big smile on old Whitey's face up in heaven, as he would have loved to jam out with Rachel on the Uke.

We have three new bands advertising this month so please go check them out and give them some love. First up we have Kevin Correll, from the Sunbury area, he has a unique blues style and is always engaging the crowd and keeping things original and interesting. Next is The Spyders of HBG. Check them out on facebook. They have a new Ep out and are looking to book some shows in the area as well. Last but not least, Ten Ton Stone who will be playing at Big Bottom Brewery on April 10th with special guests On The Rocks. Please go show all these bands some love and let them know you saw their ad in the PA Musician Magazine.

Well that's it for this month. Please, if you have some shows coming up or would like to let people know about you or your new Cd, EP, or cassette (See the Zach King review in this issue) get a hold of us. We make advertising easy and affordable. You can help us out while we help you out. It's a win, win, for everyone. Send me an email joshnoll@pamusicain.net or give me a ring 717-636-4203. *Peace, Love, and Local Music for the world!*

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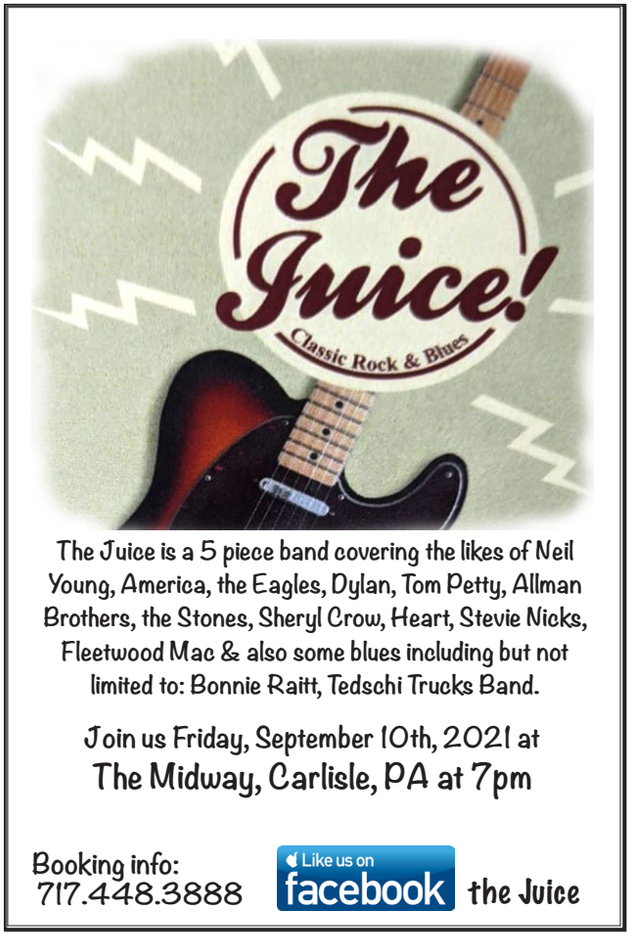
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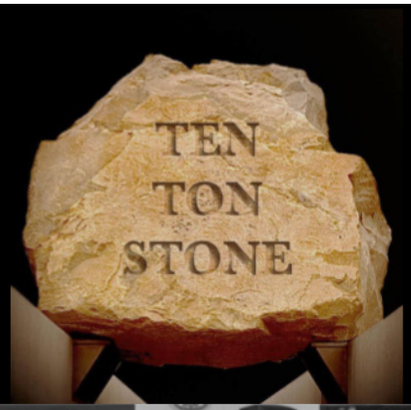

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4/17 @ 4:10pm: Cincinnati Reds national anthem (Cinn, OH)
4/23 @ 8:30pm: Club XL Live (Harrisburg, PA)
4/24 @ 9-11:00pm: Blue Sky Tavern (Etters, PA)
4/26 @ 7:00pm: The Commodore Grille (Nashville, TN)

For More dates and booking:
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OUT 'N' ABOUT

By Rachel Rocks

April is almost here!! And we will finally be able to go in a bar and not have to eat! And if we are truly lucky...live music will come back everywhere! We've been lucky to have a few shows here and there to see and enjoy, but I can't wait to have even more options.

My first stop of the month was super close to home at Newfangled Brew Works here in Harrisburg. RJ Moody was on stage playing to a full house when I arrived. When I walked in RJ was playing Lee Brice, so I knew I was going to like this show. While I was there he seemed to play quite a few of the modern, very popular country songs, but he would still throw in a couple of classics that he knew the crowd would like. Newfangled seems to be growing in popularity and getting a pretty steady crowd. It's great to see for them. I hear they are getting a whole new menu in May, with more small plates to keep it social, sharable, and affordable. Plus they have a schedule full of live music on Friday and Saturday nights which is music to my ears.

RJ Moody

Talk about music to my ears, I was able to see two FULL, head banging bands at Racehorse Tavern, Stricken and Maiden America. I knew it was going to be a great crowd with not only one, but two amazing tribute bands, but the Racehorse was packed! It was so refreshing to see a full band rocking out in all of their glory once again. When we got there Stricken already had a bunch of sweaty dancers on the dance floor. It's amazing to see how all of these bands have been able to keep their stage show at 110%. It's been so long since they've had the opportunity to play in front of a crowd, but they acted like this was something they were able to do every day. I know if it was me up there, I'd be so winded just from moving around, there is no way I'd be able to play or sing, especially with such intensity! Obviously, these guy put in lots of work on a regular basis. It's awesome watching them perform. I'm so glad Racehorse is giving bands the opportunity to get back on the stage again.

Maiden America

Next up was Maiden America. Talk about guys that are crazy on the stage! Their lead singer, Gordon is all over the stage jumping, running, singing, etc. I never had the opportunity to see Iron Maiden on stage, but I am glad I get the opportunity to see Maiden America. All of these guys put on such a great show. I always say the Tribute Bands have to work even harder since they have to perfect the artist they are paying tribute to. It's always awesome watching them play the music they've loved for so many years. I know it meant a lot to Jim at the Racehorse to see such a great crowd out supporting live music and his venue again. When things were closed with no end in sight, he couldn't help but wonder if we would ever even come back, but I think this night proved that we are all willing and ready to come back in droves! It's awesome to see live music getting such an awesome response. I can't wait until more places open and hopefully the people will continue to come out and support it!

Maiden America

Next up was a night out very locally, to Spring Gate, to see my friend Jeff's new side project, ideally called "Side Hustle". They are a new duo, Jeff plays guitar and sings and Amy plays the Cajon, and also sings as well. Jeff does a great job at interacting with the crowd and adjusting his song selection to make the crowd happy. Right at the beginning of the night a Bachlorette Party came in, and he quickly through in some Nellie which got the whole crowd dancing, singing and having a good time. He does a great job at doing his best to muddle thru song requests, even if he doesn't do all of them perfectly, the crowd still appreciates their hard work at trying! Spring Gate has music most Fridays, Saturdays, and even Sundays, they have a great set up. You can no longer bring in your own food, but they usually have delicious food trucks as options if you're hungry. Spring Grate is a winery and brewery, so there are lots of options there for everyone while you sit back and enjoy some great live music.

Stricken

Unplanned nights always get a little crazy, and this night was no different. I had dinner with Mom and Andrea and the boys. Mason went home with Mom for the weekend, so I decided to swing in to Moe's. At Moe's I convinced a group of friends to pile in my car and we zoomed down to Carlisle to the BarBQ Tavern for Derek Henry's acoustic show. The BarBQ Tavern is a tiny little place, so it was packed! Lucky for us a table opened up and we could all pile in and enjoy the show. Darrin once again sat in with Derek for a few songs which is always a special treat. Derek and Dylan have been very busy releasing new songs and videos for Observe the 93rd. They are also now on Spotify, so if you haven't already, add them to your Playlist! I'm so glad Derek is doing the acoustic thing so we at least have some entertainment, but I do REALLY miss seeing the full band, Observe the 93rd. I love finding new places that support live music. The BarBQ staff were very friendly, fast, and just super awesome! In such a tiny venue I can't imagine what it is doing to their business to not be able to have people sitting at the bar, 50% of the venue was just bar space with all the stools taken away… I am really hoping that after everything opens April 4th, it STAYS open. This is getting beyond crazy. Please stay safe, but when you can and when you feel comfortable, get out there and support small businesses, especially small businesses that host live music!

The last stop for this month was to see DMC Duo at the River House Bar & Grill in Middletown. It was nice seeing them at a new, local venue. When I arrived DMC Duo was playing to a nice, full dining room. I had some delicious wings and fries and enjoyed the show. Darrell and Marisa always put on a great show. I couldn't believe how skilled Marisa is getting with not only, obviously her vocals, but also her tambourine! If and when these two come to your town, don't miss their show!

If you haven't already, please check out the Cover Story and learn all about The Austens. I interviewed them about 10 days ago, and when we talked Nick mentioned that he recently started a TikTok page. I've seen a few TikTok videos, but I was never really on it too much, but now I'm addicted. Nick has posted quite a

continued on next page…

Side Hustle

few crazy cool videos. Some are funny, but some are educational. Like his "How to Learn to play Ukulele in 15 seconds".. well I watched, and guess what, I learned! It took me more like 15 minutes, but within 15 minutes I was playing and singing Happy Birthday to my Grandma. Now I'm learning "Amazing Grace" and now the sky is the limit! I'm a Ukaboom Girl! It really breaks my heart that I didn't take the time to learn from Dad while he was still here. He tried to teach me so many times, and I would attempt to learn, but I never really practiced the way I should. It's my friendly reminder that you never know what day will be your last, or your loved ones last. Love every moment, absorb every minute. I've been going through so many tapes that Dad recorded of not only himself, but our whole family. Every one is so priceless. I know we are very lucky to have his recordings, and I know he's up there smiling down every time I pick up his fluke and start strumming the strings. I wonder which song I should learn next…

Speaking of Dad, we are also working hard on planning his Celebration of Life. It will be Saturday, June 19th, outside on a farm in Liverpool with food trucks, and one heck of a line up of bands and entertainment!! There will be an actual Memorial to Dad at 3:30 where Pastor Tim from Abundant Harvest Church will have a little service followed by a little family jam with family members and a few friends playing some music. The Syn D'Cats will kick things off at 5pm, followed by The Sharks at 6pm, The Martini Bros. at 7pm, and the Inciters are sneaking in there somewhere, then Road Case and closing the night will be Suicide Puppets. It's going to be an amazing night of music. Dad spent a lot of time with these bands and we look forward to hearing them all play. DJ Ray Rossi will also be there spinning tracks between bands and keeping everyone entertained. This is a FREE Event but we will be accepting donations to help pay the bands, sound guy, Keith Hummel, etc.. Parking is EXTREMELY limited. Please car pool if you can!! The property is gated, if it gets to the point that we can't safely park vehicles the gate will be closed.

Side Hustle

I can't wait to get April started so we can try out their new regulations here in the state of PA. I'm hoping the extra capacity will help venues start to bring back live music too. I hear there will be some live music happening soon at XL Live and HMAC which is very exciting news! I think most venues will start with smaller acts, and will hopefully get back to "normal" soon, even though we don't really know what the new normal will be. If you see me Out and About please stop me and say Hi! If you have any tips on what songs I should learn next on the ukulele let me know. You can email me at RachelRocks@pamusician.net. Please get out there and Support Live Music and Small Businesses!

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NATIONALS

By Eric Hoffman

Greetings Rockers 'N' Rollers! Welcome to Spring and the slow return of possible live music again. As the world continues to navigate its way thru the pandemic with many receiving a vaccine, music venues have begun to prepare for their return. Harrisburg's premiere live venue, XL Live, plans to re-open this month on Friday the 16th with a focus on local artists. And HMAC will reopen on Thursday the 8th - and have begun to announce shows: Fozzy on September 9th and The Queers on September 12th. Local band, The Swisher Sweets, have also announced their return with a show scheduled at the New Cumberland American Legion on April 10th. It appears smaller shows will come first and hopefully get larger as the year progresses.

After going dormant for more than eight years, The Recher in Towson, Maryland, is preparing to reopen its doors for limited-capacity shows. The gigs begin with a Grand Opening on March 19th featuring Kelly Bell Band. The venue will be following COVID protocols, with tickets sold by table groups of four to six. Groups must arrive and enter together, will be subjected to temperature checks upon arrival, and all guests will be required to wear masks at all times except at their table. The 650-cap venue will be held to 100-person maximum capacity, including venue staff, for all shows. Over the years it has hosted the likes of Iggy Pop, Linkin Park, Slayer, Keb Mo, Vince Gill, and The White Stripes. Paul Manna of 24-7 Entertainment in Baltimore said these early shows are not about making tons of money, but just getting bands and artists back in one of Baltimore's most beloved venues. "Literally every local band I've spoken to is not concerned about money. They just want to come out and play for fans and play the new room."

Swisher Sweets

The 63rd Annual Grammys took place at the Los Angeles Convention Center on March 14, 2021. In an exceedingly trying year devoid of live performance, it was gratifying to see the 63rd annual Grammy Awards do something it's never done: devote itself almost entirely to live performance. The show featured live songs from Billie Eilish, Taylor Swift, Haim, Brandi Carlisle, Lil Baby, Bad Bunny, Miranda Lambert, Harry Styles, Bruno Mars and Anderson Paak aka Silk Sonic, Dua Lipa and DaBaby, Megan Thee Stallion and Cardi B. Megan Thee Stallion was one of the night's big winners with three Grammy statuettes. Beyoncé and Taylor Swift both made history at the 2021 Grammys. Swift, 31, became the first woman to win album of the year three times. Beyoncé made history by surpassing Alison Krauss to become the most decorated female act in Grammy history. Beyoncé earned her 28th Grammy and is now tied with producer and multi-instrumentalist Quincy Jones for the second most Grammy wins. The late conductor Georg Solti is the most decorated Grammy winner with 31 wins. An epic In Memoriam segment featured performances and tributes to those who passed in 2020 including Bill Withers, Little Richard, Eddie Van Halen, Kenny Rogers and John Prine. Attendees wore masks, socially distanced by sitting at small tables.

According to multiple sources, Motorhead legend Lemmy Kilmister's ashes were placed into bullet casings and sent to some of his closest friends. Headbanger's Ball host, Riki Rachtman, shared a photo of his bullet on social media, stating "Today I received a bullet and was literally brought to tears." And retired tennis champion Pat Cash mentioned one given to Ugly Kid Joe's Whitfield Crane while the two had dinner at Lemmy's favorite hangout, The Rainbow Bar & Grill in Hollywood. Lemmy Kilmister was laid to rest in early 2016.

A federal judge refused to release jailed Iced Earth guitarist Jon Shaffer as he awaits trial in Washington in connection with the siege on the U.S. Capitol. The Judge ordered the 53-year old musician, who resides in Indiana, held without bail on six federal criminal charges. Shaffer's attorney argues his client knows he "used bad judgment" on January 6th and wishes he had a "do-over." He also argued the musician was not responsible for the insurrection and was encouraged by former president Donald Trump. "People have the right to believe the highest elected official." Schaffer surrendered to police on January 17th after Iced Earth fans recognized the musician in a photo released by federal investigators. Schaffer is believed to be one of at least 400 people being investigated for their roles in the insurrection.

Lemmy Bullet

Downtown Las Vegas' mammoth Life Is Beautiful festival has announced its much-anticipated lineup for September 17th-19th, topped by superstars Billie Eilish, Green Day, Tame Impala, A$AP Rocky, and Illenium. The lineup which includes 60-plus artists is no small feat as major U.S. festivals largely moving to 2022. General on-sale tickets for the three-day festival start at $330 plus taxes and fees. The strong lineup also includes HAIM, Young Thug, Glass Animals, FISHER, St. Vincent, 6LACK, Modest Mouse, Dillon Francis, Ludacris, Don Toliver, LANY, Brittany Howard, San Holo, J.I.D, Surfaces, Gorgon City, EARTHGANG, Death From Above 1979, All Time Low, and many others.

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The Austens

Helping You Light Up Your Life…

By: Rachel Rocks Photos byKathleen Frances Photography

The Austens are an acoustic duo from Harrisburg, PA. Nick and Stefanie Austen, decided to start playing out as a band back in early 2019. Their first show was at an Open Mic Night at JB Lovedraft's which is known for its love of heavy/death metal and video games. Of course, The Austens don't quite fit in that genre, but they didn't let it stop them, they got up on that stage and they sang their hearts out. They broke out with Johnny Cash, mixed in some Elvis, and even ended with the Beatles. Needless to say, the crowd loved it! One thing about music is it transcends throughout all genres and generations. If you are up there, loving what you are doing, the people listening are going to love watching you do it. The best part about today's musical world is you are not trapped in a little box, you have the ability to be as creative as you want to be, and make music as beautiful as you want to make it, and The Austens have pushed open that box and are making their show be unlike anyone else in the area.

Throughout the past two years The Austens have developed their stage presence and their song repertoire. They've added in some modern rock, but they still play the oldies but the goodies, and they also have written and released quite a few original songs. They use catchy pop vocal-driven melodies and harmonies to tell their listeners stories of life, love, and longing. Their notes and lyrics quickly draw you in with their relatable charm, they will definitely make you smile and want to stay and listen for a while. One night they were playing near me at St. Thomas Roasters in Linglestown, so I was able to stop in and see and hear a show. I was instantly hooked, and a bit bummed I didn't get there earlier. One of their original songs, "Boy" is so catchy and heartfelt that you can easily relate to every word. It's also cool how even though they play covers that we've heard for years, they "Austenize" it in their own way to still make some of the songs unique.

On April 5, 2021 they will officially be releasing their newest original "Light Up My Life". They hope to start a campaign of having people reflect on what Lights Up their own Life? With everything happening all around us, it's so easy to focus on the negative, but The Austens are hoping to change that! Nick wrote this song while he was sitting at home, waiting for Stefanie to get home from work, it took about 20 minutes for him to come up with the main lyrics. An interesting fun fact about this song, it is obviously about his love for what lights up his life, but yet it doesn't mention the actual word "love" in the song. Love is so universal, and it really helps you put the song into perspective in your own life.

As they were recording the song, they decided to give it a little bit more depth, Nick added in piano, but they really wanted some strings. Luckily, so many musicians have become freelance musicians over the internet, they were able to reach out and they found an amazing violinist, Annie Leeth from Maze Studios in Georgia. They were able to send tracks over email, and before they knew it, her violin was beautifully integrated into the song, and their song "Light Up My Life" was complete. They loved the song so much they wanted to be able to promote it correctly, so they also created a video for the song. They got very lucky, and they were able to record the video in the gorgeous ballroom of the Civic Club in Harrisburg. There is so much beautiful musical history in that ballroom, it was the perfect location. They also found two amazing and professional dancers to dance together during the video, River Barry and Mandy Iglesias exceeded their expectations and added in so much beauty to the video, it was the perfect element to tie it all together. Their video can be seen on their website, www.theaustensmusic.com. You can also listen to some of their other original songs on their website as well. They will be following up the release of their song with a show on Good Day PA on abc27 on April 29th, and they will also be on air with Jim Price on his Homegrown Rocker show on June 13th.

It's awesome to see another band that didn't let Covid shut them down, if anything it allowed them to get even more creative with not only their music itself, but also in how they promote their music. Nick started his own Tik Tok page, that in the past two weeks he went from 500 followers to, as of this morning, over 17k! He recently started posting amazing, very simple to follow tutorials for guitar and ukulele. He teaches you how to play guitar in 30 seconds! And how to play ukulele in only 15 seconds! Also do you want to know how to turn your guitar into a snare?!? Check it out, Nick will show you how! You can follow him @nickaustenoftheaustens. After this interview I checked him out, and I'll admit it took me more like 15 minutes, while my noodles were boiling for dinner, but I learned how to play the ukulele. It's only been 3 days, but it's hard to believe I'm already working on 3 songs. I definitely need to, and will be, watching more of his tutorials to learn more tricks, but he makes learning so much fun and it's so easy! If you want to add more skillz to your repertoire, check him out. The Austens are also on Facebook and every other social media platform @ TheAustens, or facebook.com/TheAustens.

As any musicians, The Austens had to get their start somewhere, and both of them want to thank their parents for instilling in them, their love for music. Nick's parents always had Beatles albums around the house, which obviously is a big influence on his musical style today, and Stefanie's parents supported her incessant singing in the house for 22 years. They are all very proud of the music The Austens are creating, and they still support them as much as they can today and every day. The Austens are also very thankful for every person who stops to listen at a show, or even stops while scrolling the internet to give them a like or a follow. They love creating music, but they love sharing their music even more. They really hope you take a minute and listen to their song "Light Up My Life" and focus on the beauty and help spread the love throughout the world.

If you want to get The Austens booked at your venue you can give them a call, 717-856-8029 or email TheAustensMusic@gmail.com.

RIDER'S ON THE STORM

By Chris Rider

Spring is here...sort of at least LOL. Winter seems to not be too sure if it's done yet, but here we are at the end of March and days are generally getting nicer. New "lesser" restrictions have been announced starting next month for restaurants, bars and venues that will hopefully allow them all to ramp up their support of live music. I still see lots of artists not only playing smaller venues, doing solo acoustic shows, etc, but also continuing with their online streaming events. I can't wait to see how the local music scene just explodes (in a good way) as restrictions continue to lessen. I can't wait to see and hear all the new music these artists have worked so hard on over the last year. I've my own personal thoughts as to whether "normal" will ever return completely...but I know that the rest of the music fans out there are just as, if not more, hungry as I am for the return of music.

My first stop out was to a new to me brewery, Pineknotter Brewing up in Northumberland. These guys have a great lineup of tasty beverages, and at least on the day my son & I visited they had a food truck out front serving up some awesome Mexican food (sorry, I didn't write down their name but they were great!). First up playing was someone I'd seen a few years ago playing classic old school deep roots blues, Chris LaRose. Not only did Chris bring some of those same tunes back, he's clearly been working on his music portfolio adding songs like La Bomba, Bad Moon Rising, Hey Joe, as well as a number of his own originals. It was great seeing Chris again.

Chris LaRose

Next up at Pineknotter was a group that's played around the Northumberland area for quite a while, Kinsey. Kinsey is a quartet of guys that have been friends since high school, and have been playing for almost as long. They cover a wide array of classic rock tunes and newer ones as well such as songs by Franz Ferdinand, Weezer, Tonic, Cole Windell, The Lumineers and others. These guys played a killer set, and judging by the crowd they've still got quite a following so they're definitely a group worth checking out if you get the chance.

Kinsey

Kinsey

My next trip out was again to a new to me brewery, Liquid Noise Brewing in Marysville. First of all, these guys have a great selection of brews. I had 2 of their IPA's (I think I missed a 3rd?) and they were both delicious. They've got a kitchen in the back with a menu that'll have something for everyone. Definitely a go to place. Playing that night was my buddy Dave Gates. I met Dave about a year ago or so, and in such a relatively short time I've seen his song list grow as well as his skill at playing them. Covering songs from bands like Breaking Benjamin, to Boyz to Men, Chris Stapleton, Five Finger Deathpunch, and anything in between, he's a blast to listen to always putting his own "take" on everything he plays. You can check out his cover song list (which gets longer by the day I think) at davegates.org. You can also check out a number of videos of him playing future playing dates and his recent EP "Feel Alright 2020" through his website.

Dave Gates

Next outing was over to Shermans Creek Inn for a night of music from performers that I'd never heard of. Turns out that was because in both cases, this was their first time performing other than doing Open Mic's at SCI. First up was Das Brave, a trio that played a healthy mix of classic rock covers with a few originals mixed in. These guys played with a great energy, sounded good, and even had a number of folks up in the middle dancing.

Das Brave

Second up for the night was a solo acoustic act, Lucid Ruby. He also had a great chill and positive energy to him, played and interacted with the crowd and had a great personality. He played a wide mix of covers and originals as well. Both acts did a great job for a crowd that loved hearing them. I'm looking forward to seeing them grow and perform in the future!

Lucid Ruby

My final night out for the month was full of friends, laughs, and just an overall great night. I headed up to see my pals at Isle of Que Brewing in Selinsgrove. I want to give these hard working fellows a big shout out as they've been currently involved in a Battle of the Breweries on thebeerthrillers.com and have (so far) made it to round 4. I have no doubt that by the time you read this, they'll be in round 5. These guys are killing the micro brewery game and you're seriously doing yourself a disservice if you haven't tried them out yet. On top of this, they go out of their way to support and help out not only other local breweries, but businesses of all sorts and flavors. This evening, Hunter Root was doing his solo acoustic show, playing an awesome mix of covers, originals and of course a few from Medusa's Disco. In between songs he'd interact graciously with a crowd that was very familiar with Hunter and his music. It's always a great time seeing Hunter play and I look forward to next time for sure.

So, there it is...my last month, at least music-wise, in a bit of a nutshell through my ears and eyes. Just a reminder: if you've got a show coming up that I should see, make sure to send me an invite, shoot me an email or a message, let me know about it. Venues: please don't hesitate to reach out to me as well. The majority of the shows that I go and shoot I find out about through invites from all of you or your friends. Hit me up on facebook: @chrisriderphotography or email: chrisriderphotography@gmail.com, stop me if you see me out & around and say hi. Until next month...go find some live music and give them and the venue your support, they truly need it more now than they ever did.

Hunter Root

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THE PROFESSOR

By Jim Price

With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions on the state's restaurants and bars early this month, more live music venues are starting to open back up, and the arriving warmer outdoor temperatures should open some outdoor options for live music to happen again soon.

At present, though, COVID-19 still continues to impact venues and events. One of those events was the 25th annual Millennium Music Conference (MMC) in late February. Usually staged in-person in the Harrisburg area, this year's MMC took place virtually via video-conferencing (Hio), Facebook and YouTube. It was a different experience, but it was still largely successful as visitors to the virtual conference could arrange private mentoring sessions with music industry representatives, visit the virtual trade show tables (thanks to all who stopped by the PA Musician table, and especially New Jersey-based singer and songwriter Amanda Rose Riley for the serenade!), and view streaming video presentations by conference panelists throughout both days on Facebook and YouTube. Also included was a keynote speaker, as Frank Schofield presented "Branding Harrisburg University: Live Entertainment," which focused on how he started the Harrisburg University Concert Series in 2018.

One of the more fascinating panelist presentations I saw was Dr. E. Michael Harrington's feature on musical copyrights in court. A professor in music copyright and intellectual property matters with Berklee Online, Dr. Harrington cited several high-profile copyright cases where musicians alleged that their creations had been copied. One was the 2014 case alleging that a part from the beginning of Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to Heaven" had borrowed heavily from Spirit's 1968 song "Taurus." Dr. Harrington pinpointed the passage in question as a descending chromatic pattern, and proceeded to play the similar passages from both songs. But he then established that chromatic patterns are not considered original or protected by copyright, and demonstrated this by playing clips of similar descending patterns from songs throughout music history, including "Chim Chim Cher-ee" from "Mary Poppins" and even a passage from a Johann Sebastian Bach composition. Dr. Harrington referenced other copyright court cases, and stressed that copyright lawsuits are expensive, time-consuming, and mostly unsuccessful.

The conference's musical showcases also happened virtually this year, with showcasing bands and musicians submitting recorded live performance mini-sets, which were compiled into longer-form video showcases shown on YouTube. I got to check out nearly all of these performance clips and encountered a wide variety of music, making several fascinating discoveries along the way. Some of the standouts for me included Boston-based a cappella R&B fivesome Ball in the House, who did everything by voice, including percussion and bass sounds! Also good were funky performances by Chicago's Adem Dalipi Band and Arlington, Texas 8-piece funksters Artemis Funk. I also enjoyed the uniqueness of Los Angeles-based Russian-American singer, songwriter and pianist Marina V with her gentle and personable blend of voice, piano and insight; Hungarian jazz artist Rozina Patkai with her distinctive pairing of jazz and European folk; Netherlands-based singer/songwriter Kralingen, New York-based electronica/pop performer dolltr!ck, and Georgia-based Americana/country group BoDean and the Poachers. Pennsylvania was well-represented in the video showcases, and I witnessed performances from western PA native (now living in Manhattan) Wojo; Chicago-based former PA folk and blues artist Roger Hammer; Philadelphia's The Great Enough, Aviance and Maro DeLo, York-based performers Chris Scheler and Garrett Schultz, Lancaster's Matt Tarka and Casey Walton, Pittsburgh's Trinity Wiseman and her band, northeastern PA's Blind Choice and Josh Brokaw (performing outside in the snow); Harrisburg area performers Buckskin Whiskey, Almost Honest, Madison Ryan and Six Bar Break; and from my west-central PA homeland, Hollidaysburg's Stephanie & the Wild Hearts. I liked many other performances as well. Hats off to John Harris, Brian Cronin and all the volunteers who made this conference happen in spite of the challenging circumstances. Hopefully the COVID situation will largely be in the rearview mirror by next February, and MMC can return to its in-person form.

Another annual event impacted by COVID-19 this year was Penn State's annual Dance Marathon, better known as THON. THON was also staged as a virtual event this year via the THON website, with student participants dancing online from home or other remote locations. The bands and other entertainers kept the dancers fired up throughout THON weekend by performing and live-streaming from the empty Bryce Jordan Center. I caught two of the performances, starting with Vision To None. In spite of no visible audience other than cameras, and playing during late morning hours, Vision To None – singer and bassman Eric McCrum, singer and guitarist Chris Welker, guitarist and singer Jesse Husted and drummer Katlyn Reitz – brought the musical fun and excitement with their mix of modern rock and pop/punk favorites. Some of their tunes this day included Smash Mouth's "All Star," Jimmy Eat World's "The Middle" and the set-closer, Fall Out Boy's "Sugar, We're Goin' Down," complete with Rage Against the Machine "Killing in the Name" stinger ending! These guys were clearly fired up and making it count, excited to be on a stage and making music as well as doing it for a great cause. Later that night, I saw My Hero Zero's set from THON. Lead singer and guitarist Jason O, singer and keyboardist Caryn Dixon, bassist Greg Folsom and drummer Ethan Stewart generated the online party with their upbeat mix of rock, pop, funk, country and more. A band favorite of THON for 11 straight years, My Hero Zero lifted dancers' spirits as they did numbers from Jason Mraz, The Killers, Dua Lipa, Amy Winehouse, Nine Days, The Lumineers, Shania Twain, John Denver, Fleetwood Mac and others. Other performers donating their talents during THON weekend included Lenina Crowne, Southpaw (hosting THON Idol), Corner Brothers, Lowjack, Go Go Gadjet, several celebrity guest performers and more. Virtual THON was a major success, raising more than $10.6 million toward fighting childhood cancer via the Four Diamonds fund at Penn State Children's Hospital in Hershey. Hats off to all the dancers, volunteers, bands and performers, and all who supported this event and made it successful in spite of the COVID circumstances. Where there is a will, there is a way!

The Palace Theatre in Greensburg has continued their weekly Thursday evening "Virtually in the Palace (VIP)" online concert series, and even added some additional concerts beyond the originally-scheduled end date in late March. I saw East Coast Turnaround's performance last month. The "Fathers of Trucker Rock," East Coast Turnaround took viewers through a powerful display of their original song arsenal, which blends elements of classic and southern rock, country and soul. Singer and guitarist Chad Fetty, lead guitarist Wayne Baker, bassist Jason Fetty, harmonica man Ray Kuchinka and drummer Dane Whatule played many of the songs from their 2012 full-length album, "American Outlaw" – such as "Cadillac, Cadillac," "Neon Church," "Only You," "Music Man," "Just Like the Rolling Stones," "Outta My Head" and "Southbound 75." They also introduced two new songs, "51" and "Outlaw," and did established favorites like "Love, Life and Murder" and the intensifying "Where's My Sunshine." For their finale, East Coast Turnaround unleashed "Say Yeah," which built toward a go-for-broke homestretch where Wayne and Ray dueled on their respective instruments, before Ray did a headstand back-to-back with Wayne and played harmonica upside down!

Members of the Altoona area's independent music and art community organized the inaugural Mass N Tha Grass music and arts festival in 2019. COVID-19 prevented the festival from taking place last year, but plans are in place to stage this year's festival from August 6-8 at the Sinking Valley Fairgrounds near Skelp. Benefit events to raise funds for sound, stage gear and other improvements are under way, including last month's "Rage of the Irish" pre-St. Patrick's Day event at JOOS in downtown Altoona. Although unable to attend in person, I was able to witness much of the event's performances via Facebook live stream (courtesy of Sascha Damon Frost). While artist Chelsea McMaster commenced live painting nearby, singer and songwriter John Peacefire kicked things off with his socially-charged brand of original folk and protest music. John musically sounded off about such topics as gov-

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The Professor continued...

ernment corruption and manipulation, poverty, neglect of the environment, the human condition and more through numbers such as "War of Attrition," "Push Out the Pusher," "Like We're Still in Vietnam" and others. Next was half of Altoona-based foursome The Returners. Andy Witmyer on electric guitar and vocals plus Ian Wissinger on drums crafted a unique original sound; merging alternative, experimental, progressive and psychedelic rock elements into a constantly-moving, unpredictable soundscape. Some of their songs included the expansive "Artemis," "Annabelle," "Too Much Denial," "Until You Want" and a new number, "Colony." Singer, songwriter and Lloyd frontman Nick "Nik Mik" Munyons took the stage next to demonstrate his original indie folk flavors. Brandishing both acoustic guitar and ukulele, Nik Mik introduced several new songs on ukulele to start his set, before switching to guitar for more numbers. His songs showed simple yet catchy melodies, sudden instrumental and lyrical side journeys and more. Closing the show was Crazed Visions, the musical vision of show emcee Matthew Cain. Merging punk, folk and experimental flavors, Crazed Visions introduced original songs such as the darker "Catharsis" (dedicated to friends lost to addiction), "Rage with a Love War," "Curl Your Fingers," "Taking the Long Way Around Life" and more. Another Mass N Tha Grass-themed fundraiser concert, "Grass Roots," happened on March 30; the next show happens at JOOS on April 20.

Acoustic Fam Jam Band

Many will recall that the COVID-19 shutdown was suddenly imposed just before St. Patrick's Day last year, and the world quickly ground to a standstill. With everybody grounded for St. Patrick's Day, Boston's popular Celtic-geared punk rockers the Dropkick Murphys provided a much-needed lift with their free online "Streaming Up From Boston" concert, which drew a global audience numbering hundreds of thousands on both Facebook and YouTube. Still locked down and unable to stage a public concert a year later, the group did it again on St. Patrick's Day with their online "Still Locked Down" concert, streamed via their website and YouTube. Entertaining "Everyone out there in Computerland," the group again delivered a high-powered, raucous show as they played favorites from throughout their catalog, plus amped-up Irish/Celtic folk favorites, and select tunes from their forthcoming new album, "Turn Up That Dial," which will be released on April 30. Opening with "Hang 'Em High," the Dropkick Murphys fired through songs from the new album such as "Middle Finger," "Queen of Suffolk County" and "Smash S**t Up," and also introduced "I Wish You Were Here" after a tribute to two fallen friends of the band, Walter Glavin and Bill Dailey, Sr. The group also performed their versions of "The Fields of Athenry" and "Wild Rover," as well as their popular favorites like "Rose Tattoo," "The Dirty Glass" (with special guest singer Erin Mackenzie of The Doped Up Dollies) and "I'm

Callie Tomblin

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The Professor continued...

Shipping Up to Boston." For the show's homestretch, the Dropkick Murphys fired "Skinhead on the MBTA" into AC/DC's "Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap," before they closed out the show with their rowdy version of Sam Cooke's "Having a Party." The group invited viewer donations, with partial proceeds going toward their Claddagh Fund, which helps Boston non-profit organizations.

Sidelined last St. Patrick's Day due to COVID-19, area Irish-rock favorites Full Kilt played eight shows in nine days for this year's St. Patrick's season, including a post-St. Patrick's Day show at McGarvey's. The fully-kilted cast of singer and guitarist Mike Zerbee, bassist and singer Chris Myers, fiddler Mandy Passmore-Ott and drummer Jake Yarnish kept the festive audience happy with their mix of Irish folk, pub and rock favorites, Irished-up rock numbers, fiddle tunes, original songs and more. The group did favorites such as "Whiskey in the Jar," "Irish Rover," "The Night Paddy Murphy Died," "Darcy's Donkey" and others. They covered Dropkick Murphys numbers such as "Rose Tattoo" and "I'm Shipping Up to Boston," Flogging Molly favorites like "Devil's Dance Floor" and "Drunken Lullabies," plus numbers from Gaelic Storm, Great Big Sea and more. Full Kilt gave Irish treatments to non-Irish numbers too, such as Alabama's "Irish (Mountain) Music," Charlie (Mc)Daniels' "The Devil Went Down to (Dublin)," Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls" and Smokie's "Living Next Door to Alice." And they did a couple of their own songs as well, performing "Plastic Paddies" and "Come Have A Drink With the Band." Both Full Kilt and the audience clearly appreciated this year's opportunity to celebrate St. Patrick's season in person.

Full Tilt

I journeyed to Heroes Tavern in Nanty Glo for my first time last month to see singer and songwriter Callie Tomblin in action. This was the first I have seen Callie perform in-person after witnessing a couple of her live stream performances during the past year. Despite some technical difficulty, Callie still impressed with her hearty variety of folk and blues-infused music. Her performance contained numerous shining moments, as she did fresh-sounding versions of Bad Company's "Shooting Star," Bill Withers' "Ain't No Sunshine," the Rolling Stones' "Beast of Burden," Jim Croce's "Bad Bad Leroy Brown," White Stripes' "Seven Nation Army," Steely Dan's "Do It Again" and lots more. Callie showed a knack for taking her varied cover song selections and making each over into her own distinctive style and sound; I especially liked her incursions into Prince territory, as she tagged Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive" with Prince's "When Doves Cry" and later broke out her take on "Little Red Corvette." She also did at least one of her original numbers, "Satisfy Me." Callie successfully won new fans and applause as the night proceeded. Coupled with a tasty cheesesteak sandwich and the house's Heroes Lager (made by the Pittsburgh Brewing Company), Callie's performance made it well worth the journey to experience.

Chad Fetty

Besides Callie, I was able to see several other groups for the first time in recent weeks – including K4 Kountry, who entertained last month at Steele's Tavern near Hopewell. Consistent with their name, K4 Kountry – singer Jason Peterman, guitarists Mike Fox and Griffin Patterson, bassist Russel Patterson and drummer Ed Murvine – performed hard-driving country music favorites with some rock'n'roll thrown in along the way. They did country hits from Collin Raye, David Lee Murphy, Chris Young, Jason Aldean, Hal Ketchum, Toby Keith, Billy Ray Cyrus, Tim McGraw, Dwight Yoakam, Luke Bryan, Randy Houser, Johnny Cash and more. They also included some southern rock favorites like Marshall Tucker Band's "Can't You See" plus Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Gimme Three Steps" and "Sweet Home Alabama," and tunes from the Eagles, Kenny Loggins, Free and Chuck Berry. K4 Kountry sounded good, and played it all with joy and enthusiasm, keeping the audience happy from start to end.

Ray Kuchinka
East Coast Turnaround
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Three-quarters of the line-up of Krazy Kat Daddies has re-emerged onto area stages as Freedom Rocks, who I caught in action last month during "Friday Wine Down" at Altoona's Oak Spring Winery. Singer Jo Ann Nardelli, drummer Mike Nardelli and guitarist Vic Sabo mixed up a variety of rock'n'roll favorites from the 1960s through 1980s. Freedom Rocks broke out early rock'n'roll numbers like Roy Orbison's "Oh Pretty Woman," the Isley Brothers/ Beatles' "Twist and Shout," The Chantays' "Pipeline," The Crystals' "Da Doo Ron Ron," Kathy Young & The Innocents' "1,000

continued on page 18...

Jo Ann Nardelli
Freedom Rocks

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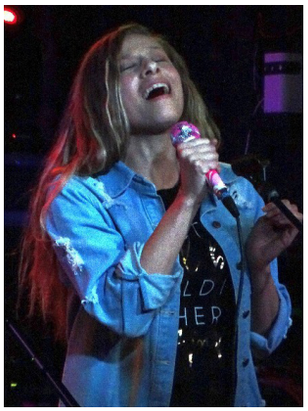
The Professor continued...

Stars" and more; also classic rock favorites from Stevie Ray Vaughan, Joan Jett, John Mellencamp, ZZ Top, Santana, Fleetwood Mac, AC/DC, BTO, The Doors and others. Freedom Rocks had fun through it all, encouraging seat grooving and receiving a good response from the audience.

During my first-ever visit to The Grove in Strongstown early last month, I saw both Stacy & the Rejects and Acoustic Fam Jam for the first time. The rhythm section of bassist Redawg Solinski and drummer Mike Davis powered both bands this night. Kicking off, Acoustic Fam Jam performed acoustic rock-geared favorites from the 1960s through 1990s. With Redawg and Mike providing the rhythms, guitarists Ray Davis and John Smith shared singing duties as Acoustic Fam Jam entertained with songs from REM, CCR, 3 Doors Down, Van Morrison, Sister Hazel,



Carli Jones

Mike, Russel, & Jason of K4 Kountry

Stealer's Wheel and more. The wife-and-husband tandem of singer Stacy and guitarist Tony Feighner head up Stacy & the Rejects, with Redawg and Mike powering the party. Stacy & the Rejects delivered the rocking party, firing up the house with favorites from Duran Duran, Gretchen Wilson, Journey, Elle King, Wild Cherry, Pat Benatar, Blondie, Poison, Joan Jett, Loverboy and more. Stacy showed a great voice this night, dazzling as she belted on renditions of Pat Benatar's "Hit Me with Your Best Shot," Jefferson Airplane's "White Rabbit" and Guns N Roses' "Sweet Child O'Mine." The crowd enjoyed Stacy & the Rejects enough to demand two encores at night's end, which the group answered with Grand Funk Railroad's "We're an American Band" and Janis Joplin's "Me and Bobby McGee" respectively.

And I saw two more bands for the first time during a triple-bill at McGarvey's in late February, headlined by the PennSoulvanians. Opening was new young Altoona-based power trio The Pines. Comprised of Logan, Ben and Alex, The Pines instrumentally rocked favorites from Metallica, Black Sabbath, Rage Against the Machine, Led Zeppelin and more to awaken the crowd. Next was Clearfield foursome Innocent Sin, who dazzled on a mixture of soul, rock, blues and reggae. Featuring singer Carli Jones, guitarist and singer Adam Caldwell, bassist Robert Misho and drummer Adam Moore, Innocent Sin generated cheers as they did numbers such as the Allman Brothers' "Whipping Post," a grooving take on Roberta Flack/Fugees' "Killing Me Softly With His Song," Gary Clark, Jr.'s "Bright Lights" and more. Carli delivered excellent voice, Adam showed a strong voice and feisty guitarwork, and Innocent Sin generated the groove to fire the audience up. The PennSoulvanians kept that groove going during their nightcap set, keeping the crowd lively with their mixture of soul, hip-hop and folk-driven origjnal numbers. Both singer/guitarist Chet Denny and rap artist Michael Thomas again complemented each other on the vocal end, supported by guitarist Nate Nagle, keyboardist Brett Fanelli, bassist Mike Stanley and drummer Todd Harshbarger. The PennSoulvanians excelled on original numbers like "Day Has

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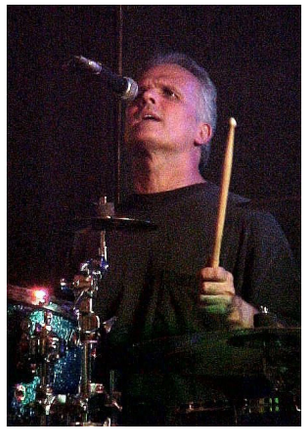
The Professor continued...

Come," "Pennsoulvania," "Won't Be a Third Time," "Strip Off All Your Clothes," "Forty Acres," "Girl You Deserve to Be" and more. Guests Danny Rivera and Todd McKeone helped with vocals on a couple of songs. The PennSoulvanians continue to grow their fan base and popularity with each show; if you haven't discovered them yet, make the point to do so soon!

After months away due to the pandemic, Felix & the Hurricanes resumed their Sunday night residency at Altoona's Black & Gold Tavern last month. During the Sunday I attended, the Hurricanes – singer, guitarist and lead 'Cane Felix Kos, drummer and singer Bob Watters, and – back in action after a recent illness – bassist and singer Jeff Clapper were clearly glad to be back in the house this night! Felix was generating some serious lightning on his seasoned Stratocaster guitar, leveling scorching solos and slide work, and making that instrument gloriously sing, scream and howl! The Hurricanes took the audience on an exciting musical joyride through lots of southern and classic rock favorites from the likes of the Eagles, Allman Brothers, Lynyrd Skynyrd, ZZ Top, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Chuck Berry, Molly Hatchet and many more. My favorite highlights included the band members' solo rounds to close out the Allman Brothers' "No One to Run With," Stevie Ray Vaughan's "Couldn't Stand the Weather" and Felix's powerful Strat-generated steam engine acceleration leading into the group's forceful rendition of Blackfoot's "Train Train." An unexpected pleasant surprise was the Hurricanes introducing and dedicating Glen Campbell's "Wichita Lineman" to bassman Jeff's parents.

The area and state music scene have been saddened by recent passings…The Altoona area music community mourned the passing of Steve Brulia on February 24 following a battle with cancer. Steve provided the drum beats behind many area bands over the past five decades, including the Rolling Rockers, FM, The Verge, Sidestep, Johnny Danger, Cosmic Lounge and others; and most recently, his duo with Matt Burns, Bodacious B. Steve also took part in a number of jam nights, and was an ardent supporter of the area music scene… And Eileen Hertweck, the wife of Rob James of The Clarks, passed away on February 27 following a two-year battle with leukemia. She was 42. We send our heartfelt sympathies to the families, loved ones and friends of both.



Steve Brulia

News and notes…The Board of Directors of the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts in State College announced the cancellation of this year's festival in July due to continued health concerns regarding the COVID-19 pandemic…Likewise, the annual Philipsburg Heritage Days Festival, also scheduled for July, has also been cancelled due to COVID-19 health concerns…Altoona will see a new concert series this summer, as the Rockin' the Yard series takes place over six Fridays from June through September, and will be staged in the yard behind Altoona's Jaffa Shrine Center…The organizers of the SOSPGH Concert Series have announced Season 2 of the online concert series, happening four consecutive Thursdays in April; April 8 will be "Singer Songwriter Night," April 15 is "Blues Night," April 22 is "Jazz Night," and April 29 will be "Metal Night." Visit www.sos2020pgh.org for more details…The Allegheny Ukulele Collective's Virtual Allegheny Ukulele Soiree event takes place on Saturday, May 1… Jaren Love, the former frontman and guitarist of Altoona-turned-Pittsburgh-based indie rockers The Lampshades, has launched his new band project called Dream Home…Danville-based singer and songwriter Van Wagner has formed a new band, Van Wagner and Buffalo Valley Railroad…Local popular music duo Raining Blue announced they are going their separate ways after ten years of performing on area stages…And Johnstown rockers Silver Screen have announced the addition of a new member, guitarist Kody Ofsanko.

Please send correspondence and recordings to: Jim Price, 1104 S. Catherine St., Altoona, PA 16602. You can also e-mail me at jptheprofessor@gmail.com. And if you're into social networking, look me up on Facebook. SUPPORT LOCAL MUSIC!

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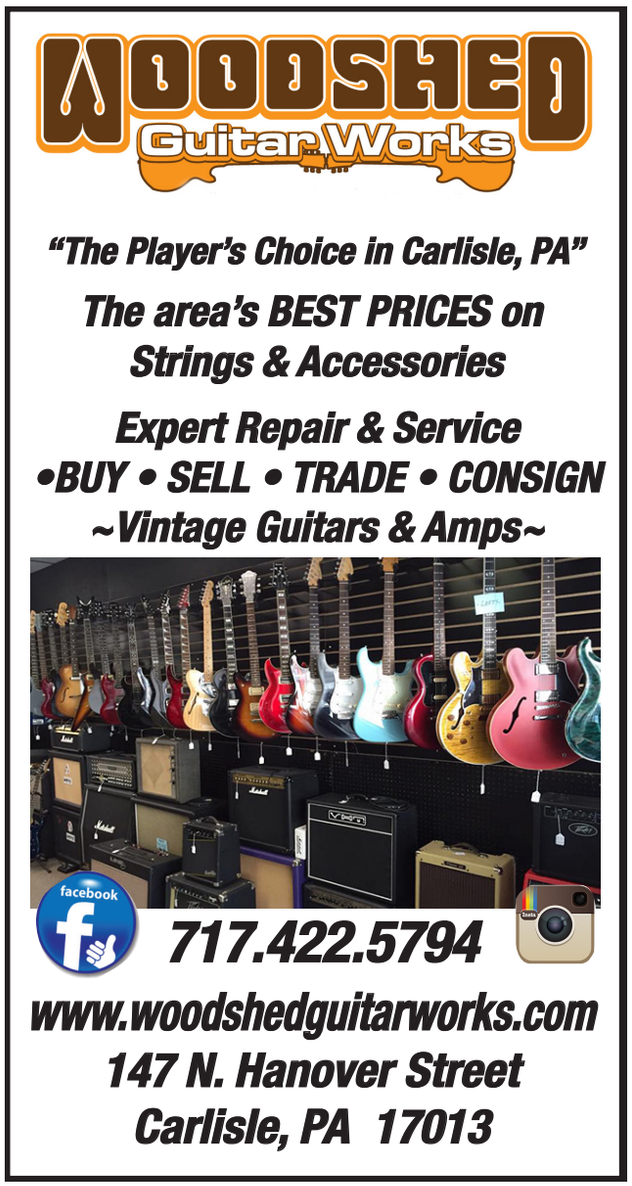

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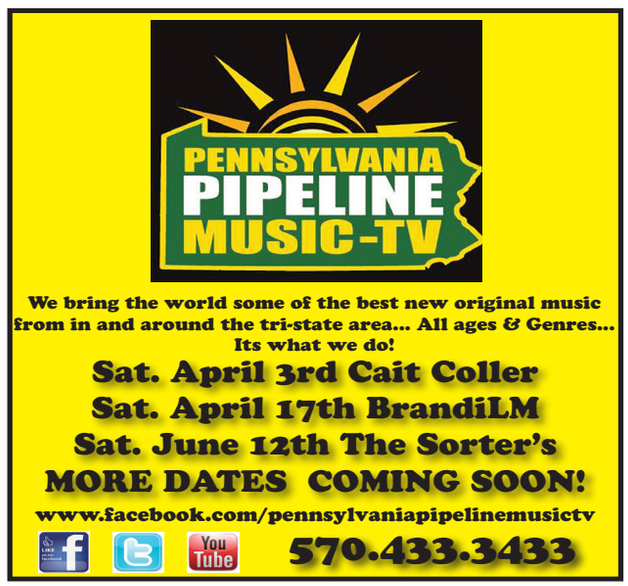
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PA MUSICIAN REVIEWS

By Jim Price

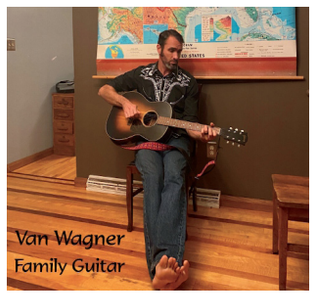
ZACH KING – PEACE OF MIND EP (Tuscarora Records) In this age of digital media – digital .mp3 and .wav files, digital streaming and digital CD's – it's refreshing to encounter an artist who champions the "old-school" analog realm to bring his music to life. Perry County-based singer and songwriter Zach King does exactly that with his five-song cassette EP, Peace Of Mind. Sure, you can stream the songs on Spotify, and the digital recording was officially released late last month, but the hard-copy is in cassette form, complete with casing and cassette-styled cover artwork! And the recording is "old-school" analog as well, as Zach recorded the five songs on vintage reel-to-reel equipment at Shaw Ranch Studio in Newville. As the recording technique is traditional, Zach's

musical style is traditional as well, as his passion is traditional country music, rooted especially in the rebel country styles of David Allan Coe and Hank Williams, Jr. With whiskey as a primary connecting thread, Zach sings about life, love and hardships; he decides that family and friends outweigh blue collar life and the 9-to-5 on the EP's first song, "Ohio," and he ponders the crossroads between sowing his wild oats and becoming more responsible on "Grow Up." The title song "Peace Of Mind" seeks solitude and self-assurance amid the constant collisions along life's busy highway, and Zach extols the comforts of whiskey and tobacco in soothing the day's pains on "Vice." On the EP's closing number, "Whiskey" serves as a pivotal ingredient in Zach's restless songwriting process. Playing guitar and singing with a bold and gritty voice, Zach's presentation sounds sincere and edgy, conveying the persona of somebody who lives the life of which he sings. His support cast fleshes out the songs well, from Travis Egnor's pedal steel, lead guitar and accordion accents to Lindsay Hutchinson's timely backing voice. The analog recording serves Zach's music well, giving these songs a full, organic quality and authenticity. Peace Of Mind provides honest country music, as Zach King honors classic rebel country tradition with a heartfelt, sturdy set. (The cassette can be purchased at RecordSmith in Mechanicsburg, and the digital songs can be accessed through Spotify, iTunes, Apple Music and other streaming platforms.)

WAX MEKANIX – MOBOCRACY (Electric Talon Records) Although these days based in Philadelphia, Waxim "Wax" Ulysses Mekanix – Wax Mekanix for short and the creative alias of former area musician Tim Wilson – provided drum thunder and vocals four decades ago for Centre Hall-based heavy-rocking foursome Nitro. As Wax Mekanix, he explores new hard-rocking sonic frontiers while attempting to make sense of today's tumultuous and transformed America over the six tracks of his debut album, Mobocracy. Wax blends classic and contemporary rock elements into a busy-sounding, lively mix, assisted by a dozen musical contributors – among them Brandon Yeagley and Chris Bishop of Crobot, Tommy Conwell, his Nitro bandmate John Hazel and more.

Lyrically, Wax cleverly juxtaposes themes of change, divisions, polarization, rage and other aspects of today's American conversation, in the hopes of determining where he – and listeners – fit in the overall scheme of things. The punchy and frantic "All Freaks" lays out the spectrum of current craziness, from political and racial divides to radical movements to cults of personality, establishing that perhaps we all have become nuts from the turmoil. The anthemic "Victorious" touts pride, triumph, conquest and glory, but questions the arrogance and abuses of power used to achieve them. The boisterous album-opener "Blood in My Eyes" questions words, behaviors and the ulterior motives behind them; while the slightly Mediterranean-toned closer "Black" ponders divisions and who ultimately benefits from them. Wax sings and howls his words with vigor and purpose, with various vocal layers and degrees of reverb adding edge and adventure along the way. There's never a dull moment; the songs are captivating and unique, and the performances are action-packed and vibrant. Recorded at several studios in the Philadelphia area, and produced by Wax and Maxim "Lectriq" Laskavy, Mobocracy sounds sharp-edged, fresh and powerful. Wax Mekanix crafts an exciting adventure here; Mobocracy is a hard-hitting set that will make you rock – and think. (The album can be obtained through Wax Mekanix's Bandcamp page.)

VAN WAGNER – FAMILY GUITAR (no label) "Guitars, like people, are beautiful things," sings Van Wagner on the title track of his latest and 28th album, Family Guitar. The song tells the story of a special 1954 Gibson LG1 acoustic guitar, an instrument gifted from Van's grandfather to his aunt to its current owner, who wrote and recorded all of the album's dozen songs on this "family guitar." Like its owner, the guitar serves as a connecting thread through the traditional folk and blues flavors of the album, as Van shares reflections, wisdom and insights about life, work, Pennsylvania, personalities and more. Several songs center on Van's home area of Danville; the song "Montour Ridge" is both autobiographical and historical, as Van – who has logged trees – sings of the ridge behind his home and the hard difficulties of lumbering there. He remembers a local woodcutter with the album-opening ode "Sawhorse Gabe," celebrates a heralded Danville personality, Larry Gipple, on the song "Mr. Danville," and recalls a Muncy area railroader on "Johnny Martin." Having also mined coal in his life, Van muses about coal-mining beliefs, habits and superstitions on "Day of Descension." In a personal vein, Van shares his aspirations of visiting the ocean during a difficult year on "I'm From the Mountains and I'm Going to the Sea." He reflects on his secretive woes on "Confidential Blues," and pays homage to a lost friend on the comforting "It's OK to Cry Now." In a different twist, Van closes the album with a song he created on the spot as he recorded it; the observational, whimsical and waltz-like "Hupaday Daydingo." Van sings these songs with a constant sincerity and warmth, like a longtime friend is sharing his personality and soul. He also brings personality through his "family guitar" with his technique and tone. Several guests chime in with backing vocals along the way – including Hannah Bingman-Forshey, Pure Cane Sugar's Kate Anderson Twoey, Regina Wolfe, Haley Berge and Zoey Wagner. Mastered by George Graham, the album



sounds crisp, cohesive and full, with Van and his presentation in the forefront. Family Guitar offers a sonic snapshot of a seasoned songsmith and his world; Van Wagner eagerly welcomes us into that world, and the album feels like a get-together with a longtime friend. (The album can be obtained through Van's website, www.vanwagnermusic.com.)

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GELATINOUS CUBE – TECHNICOLOR DREAMS (no label) Since their inception several years ago, State College-based foursome Gelatinous Cube has steadily evolved their uniquely eclectic style of original rock; issuing a self-produced and titled 2016 studio set, and last year's live Here and Now set. The group's latest album, Technicolor Dreams, continues their explorations as they mix elements of hard, progressive and alternative rock with jazz and jam components over a dozen tracks. Guitarist and singer Tom Harper, guitarist Graham Colby, bassist Ed Colby, and drummer and singer Z. Rozzi freely mingle these musical

elements together into detailed melodies, peppered with improvisation-laden instrumental passages, plus tempo, chord and texture shifts. The short instrumental passage "Lucky 13" leads into the album's title track, "Technicolor Dreams," with an alluring melody plus words exploring dreams and the memories and mysteries contained within. Tom's synth underscore helps generate a 1960s psychedelic rock vibe on "Ocean of Blood," pondering the millions of lives sacrificed throughout mankind's history on the path to today's world. Gelatinous Cube displays progressive rock tendencies on the mostly-instrumental "The Divide" and the improvisational instrumental "Alone," and flexes heavy metal muscle on the forceful conquest-themed assault "Dominator." The group presents milder rock tones as well; including reflective odes such as "All Used Up" and "Nothing More," the romantic "Carry It Along" and the mournful "Claudia." Gelatinous Cube's detailed song arrangements and instrumental interaction keep the album busy and interesting throughout. Tom sings with clarity and vocal agility, and the guitar players show capable tone, coordination and precision. Recorded in State College, with production and primary engineering by Tom, Technicolor Dreams sounds clear, balanced, full and cohesive. This album further defines Gelatinous Cube's distinctive musical identity; Technicolor Dreams shows the group's evolution as song creators and adventurers. (The album can be obtained through Gelatinous Cube's Bandcamp page.)

OFFENSIVE – INHABITANTS OF PURGATORY (no label) Guitarist Leon Sohail founded Baltimore area heavy metal rockers Offensive in November, 2015, and the group has since evolved its brand of progressive-geared power, thrash and speed metal. After several demos and EP's, Offensive presents their first full-length CD, Inhabitants of Purgatory. Providing well over an hour of intense, hard-hitting music over 11 tracks, Offensive shows fierce, forceful and tenacious song arrangements with brute-force rhythms courtesy of drummer Brett Bronstein and bassist Chris Coleman, and searing, snarling guitar work courtesy of Leon and Ryan Mullen. But Offensive also shows a sense of adventure, with experimental song constructions, interesting tempo variations, spoken word passages and more. Lyrically, Inhabitants of Purgatory provides an abridged summary of a story from Leon's 2006 novel "Kings of the Underworld," dealing with themes of mythology, warriors, religion, mankind's destiny and more. Offensive brings the firepower from the get-go, with the album-opening "Kings of the Underworld" erupting into a scorcher with full-force battering ram rhythms and Leon's go-for-broke vocal howl. Offensive continues the assault with the bold and brash "Tales of a Fallen" and the hammering speed/thrash metal rampage "No Speed Limit." The group starts to show its folds and layers with "Life in the Attic," with gang chorus vocals and lyrical wordplays that work both along and counterpoint to the rhythms. With its frequently shifting tempos and chords, "Offensive Mob" brings full-thrashing fury punctuated by spoken-word passages and narration. The album's most elaborate display is the nearly 10-minute epic "Azrael's Reaping," mixing torrid metal barrages with narrative interludes, unpredictable twists and turns, and instrumental precision and detail. Offensive is up to the challenge throughout the album, and their performances are constantly feverish, tight and intense. Leon fully invests in his creations, emphatically howling, barking and reciting his words and themes with emotion and passion. The recording, mixing and production result in an album that sounds consistently sharp, balanced, focused and cohesive. Fans of Metallica-like ferocity, Slayer-like brutality and Iron Maiden-like progression and adventurism will find plenty to celebrate on Inhabitants of Purgatory, as Offensive sets the bar high for both their firepower and creativity. This is impressive thinking man's heavy metal with lyrical and sonic nuances to be discovered through repeat listens. (The album can be obtained through the group's website, www.offensiveband.com.)

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FOR SALE: Tascam DA-88 multi-track recorder with SY-88 sync card and RC-848 remote control. Well maintained. Includes sync/digital dubbing cables. Much more, 570-606-3677.

FOR SALE: Behringer 550 watt powered speaker system with mixer, cables ect $595 Alisis double bass electric drum set with gorilla amp $395 call 717-379-8010

FOR SALE: Lester upright piano made in 1910. The Piano is in good working condition call 814-244-0248

FOR SALE: Deluxe American "P" bass transparent red like new with hard case hardly played asking $1000 or O.B.O call 717-653-5207

FOR SALE: Littlite gooseneck task lights. Desktop/tripod mic holders. Pair of AKG 391 B condenser mics. 570-606-3677

FOR SALE: t.c. Electronics M5000 w/ADA-1, DSP-1 and Digital Toolbox. Professional high-end multi-effects unit with mastering package.One owner, studio-kept. 570-606-3677

FOR SALE: PRESONUS FIRESTUDIO AUDIO INTERFACE Includes MONITOR STATION REMOTE, software, owner's manuals, and AC power supply. Excellent condition. 570-606-367

FOR SALE: 56 Stan Kenton 45 RPM records all in vinyl sleeves, in mint condition $100 Crate 3 channel Keyboard-bass amp in excellent condition $150 717-379-8010

FOR SALE REDUCD PRICE !!!!. PROFORM 395 Pi TREADMILL. RUNS GREAT..start running & walking again. COST $900. Selling for $250 or best offer call Ed in PM 717-463-2108 McAlisterville
Email: mtmanedro@yahoo.com

FOR SALE: Tascam 380 24 track recording board with V.U. meters, $300 firm. Call 717-627-4800.

FOR SALE: Mastering cassette recorders like new, $25 each for 2 door, $20 each for 1 door. Call 717-627-4800.

MUSICIANS WANTED: Singer/writer/rhythm guitarist seeks musicians for greasiest, raunchiest honky tonk band in the Western world. Steel and fiddle players to the front. 610-334-8630.

WANTED: Established working rock band looking for female vocalist. Playing music from the 80's to current radio hits. Dates being booked. Serious Inquiries only. 570- 863-8450

WANTED: THE JEDZONS classic rock R&B soul from 60-70-80-90s needs a guitarist. Check our YouTube channel if interested call Randy, York 407-239-9116

WANTED: Female Vocalist needed for well-established working cover band in Central PA & Md. Info available on website at www.clockwork-band.com or call 717 880-0101

WANTED: Bass player for old school Rock/Metal covers and originals. Hbg. Pro gear, transportation required. Call or text Dave 717-525-0014.

WANTED: Reliable Drummer needed for classic, modern rock band. Must have transportation, gear, friendly but serious atmosphere. Practice few times monthly. Reading, Berks County area. Call: 610-607-3516

Musician wanted: Guitarist looking to play with another guitarist to gain your undivided attention to play at the same level then add other musicians as needed. call 717-303-4211.

WANTED MUSICIANS: guitarist and drummer wanting to collaborate with solid bass player and solid rhythm guitar player, to put together music 70's-80's stuff. Rehearsal spot nice 717-303-4211

Seeking guitarist: Heavy metal drummer age 33 seeking a guitarist to play covers but not limited to, Iron Maiden, Saxon, Riot, Yngvie Malsteen, Savatage, Armored Saint basically early thrash! Text 717-422-7650.* NO DRAMA * Harrisburg Area.

WANTED: Dead Bird Pie, an original punk rock n' roll band, is auditioning lead guitarists and bass players. Email deadbirdpie@gmail.com for more info.

WANTED: DRUMMER for variety band based in Carlisle & Duncannon. Prefer age 50+. NO drug, alcohol or ego issues. MUST HAVE reliable transportation. 717-919-1278.

WANTED: Solo Country Artist seeking guitarist, bassist, drummer, and vocalist to play and write some great country music. Interested? Hit me up at michaelmckenziemusic@yahoo.com or 717-816-9156.

WANTED: New project looking for bass player and a singer. We wanna play some covers and a few originals mixed in. Rock/Metal. Seasoned musicians. Flexible time slots. Pro gear required. Call Dave 717-525-0014

WANTED: Musician: Vocalist needed for a hard rock/hair metal cover band, that also writes originals. yeldarbsperk@yahoo.com or 570-412-7614

WANTED: Drummer needed for experienced top 40 cover dance band with active 2020 schedule. Call or text for more information, 717-880-0101.

WANTED: Co-writer. Aspiring lyricist seeking a musician to write songs with. If interested please email mikeefacc@gmail.com.

WANTED: BASS PLAYER: John Entwistle impersonator bassist wanted for National touring & gigging who tribute band must be able to look and play like John Entwistle call or text France 310-798-8294

WANTED: Musicians. York area bassist and drummer seeking guitars, keys, and vocals for a powerhouse lineup. Danceable and fun rock. Email: Drummerboy922@yahoo.com or call: 717-424-4451

MUSICIAN AVAILABLE: Drummer available, seasoned pro. classic rock, R&B, Funk, dance band. 70s - current. Top equipment modern sound, flexible, pocket player. Joe 717-576-6320.

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AVAILABLE: Drummer age 33, looking for a reliable lead guitarist. Looking to play material related to Queensryche, Fates Warning, Armored Saint. Have Space, no drama. Text 717-422-7650

AVAILABLE: Experienced Bassist looking to join or start new band. into multiple styles of music call: Roby at 717-668-1524

AVAILABLE DRUMMER: State College Area. Top Gear and Chops, All Styles. Can Travel. Long Term, Backfill gigs, Short notices Ok. Not Greedy. Jon at 814-810-7686.

AVAILABLE: Mature guitar player exp. into Classic Rock/ Blues/Oldies- Beatles- Stones- Petty-Aerosmith-Skynerd-AC/ DC etc. Looking for working/ near working band, Trio/Duo's etc. Backing/Vocals. Reliable and Ex. equipment. Last 15 plus years with the "Close Call" Band.York-Lanc-Harrisburg. e-mail jonkri@comcast.net or 717-246-3453

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